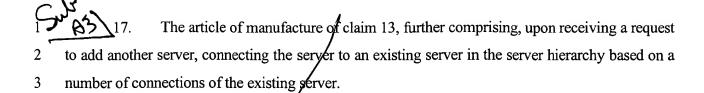WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A method of searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources within a computer system, the method comprising the steps of:

    receiving a request for data at a federated data source; and

    selecting a server to process the request based on a load of the server and based on whether the server can satisfy the request for data.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising forwarding the request to the selected server.

3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising forwarding additional requests for similar data to the selected server.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the server is within a server hierarchy.

5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising, upon receiving a request to add another server, connecting the server to an existing server in the server hierarchy based on a number of connections of the existing server.

6.   The method of claim 1, further comprising, upon receiving a request to delete an existing server in the hierarchy, deleting that server.

7.   An apparatus for searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources, comprising:

    a computer system having one or more heterogeneous data sources; and

    one or more computer programs, performed by the computer system, for receiving a request for data at a federated data source and selecting a server to process the request based on a load of the server and based on whether the server can satisfy the request for data.

1	8.	The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising forwarding the request to the selected
2	server.

1	9.	The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising forwarding additional requests for similar
2	data to the selected server.

1	10.	The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the server is within a server hierarchy.

1	11.	The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising, upon receiving a request to add another
2	server, connecting the server to an existing server in the server hierarchy based on a number of
3	connections of the existing server.

1	12.	The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising, upon receiving a request to delete an
2	existing server in the hierarchy, deleting that server.

1	13.	An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium readable by a
2	computer system and embodying one or more instructions executable by the computer system to
3	perform method steps for searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources within a
4	computer system, the method comprising the steps of:
1	receiving a request for data at a federated data source; and
2	selecting a server to process the request based on a load of the server and based on whether the
3	server can satisfy the request for data.

1	14.	The article of manufacture of claim 13, further comprising forwarding the request to
2	the selected server.

1	15.	The article of manufacture of claim 14, further comprising forwarding additional
2	requests for similar data to the selected server.

1	16.	The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the server is within a server hierarchy.

1   17.   The article of manufacture of claim 13, further comprising, upon receiving a request

2   to add another server, connecting the server to an existing server in the server hierarchy based on a

3   number of connections of the existing server.

1   18.   The article of manufacture of claim 13, further comprising, upon receiving a request

2   to delete an existing server in the hierarchy, deleting that server.